USE THE UNION'S POWER

UPSURGE

NUMBER 3 MONTHLY UPS WORKERS' PAPER NOVEMBER, 1975

UPSurge Takes Off

SHIFTING INTO HIGH GEAR

[upsurge (ŭp sûrj′),n. a surging movement, rush, or sweep, like that of swelling or rolling waves; the onward surge of an angry mob.]

That's Webster's definition. Soon they will have to add that upsurge is also a national movement of angry UPS workers. Since the first issue in Sept. we have received about 175 letters from 24 states. The message is loud and clear: people are fed up with their treatment by UPS and want to do something about it. And they are tired of the union doing nothing.

There's a U.S. map on a wall in Cleveland with red pins in it for each city where UPSurge is read and distributed. Every time a new pin goes into that map, a UPS supervisor somewhere feels Excederin headache #10 coming on. The headache is going to get bigger.

The press run of the September issue was 4000. We ran out. We figured we'd play it safe and print 6000 in October. We ran out again. We're printing 10,000 of this issue and hope to run out of it too.

Financially the paper is on solid ground The contributions and subscriptions amount to about $2,000. By the time we mail this issue out, our expenses will have been about $1,600. Our expenses should run about $600 per month at the 10,000 copy level, so we need continuing regular contributions to keep in the black.

Regional Meetings

The job now is to organize the anger that UPS workers all over the country feel toward the company and the union. As this paper goes to press there will be three regional meetings sponsored by UPSurge. In Cleveland Nov. 22nd there is a meeting of UPS workers from Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana. On Nov. 23rd there is a meeting of Chicago UPS'ers. On Dec. 6th there is a New York City meeting of UPS'ers from New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey.

Decent Contract

These meetings will begin to talk about ways to stop UPS's attack on our working conditions and jobs. In Chicago and Cleveland one task is starting to organize the fight for decent contracts on April 30 when the Chicago and Central States contracts expire. It will probably take a strike in these areas to force UPS to cough up a decent contract. These meetings are just the beginning of building the unity and organization necessary to pressure the negotiations and prepare for a strike if necessary.

Eastern Region

The New York meeting will have to discuss the new Eastern regional contract that the International Union plans to force on most, if not all, the locals in the Eastern Conference of Teamsters. In the East UPS has successfully isolated and defeated strikes in individual locals or small areas. The job to be done in the East is to weld all the locals into one bargaining unit under the control of the rank and file, so that next time around UPS is the one that's defeated.

Northern Cal

We have heard there will be a meeting for the Northern California UPS workers. This meeting will have to start organizing a fight against UPS's outrageous harassment and intimidation in this area. Also the meeting must begin developing a strategy for the northern California contract which expires on March 31. People on our mailing lists in these areas will get details for these meetings as soon as we know them.

A Movement

These meetings are only a beginning. There will be more regional meetings sponsored by UPSurge. We have to build a national movement of UPS workers with a unity and communications network as strong as that of UPS itself. Along with other rank and file Teamsters, we have to rebuild our union so that it fights for us instead of giving everything away to the company. We can do it. Join the UPSURGE.

Anne Mackie, Cleveland,OH

Cleveland Steps Up

MEMBERS CHOOSE ALTERNATE STEWARDS

200 Cleveland area UPSers came out November 9 for the first separate divisional meeting of Local 407, Cleveland's local for freight and UPS. Full-timers and part-timers showed up armed with months and years worth of complaints, frustrations and anger. That much the Local officials might have expected. What they didn't expect was proposals.

After months and years of supervisors doing union work, failure of the company to abide by the contract, general harassment and general B.S., Cleveland area UPS workers have come to see that bitching and moaning is not enough. It's time we organize and do something about it.

Cleveland's West Center has forged the way. With a solid fighter for a steward and good shop-floor organization, West Center UPSers have called time on the company's offenses. Bid runs really are opened for bidding; supervisors don't get away with doing union work; grievances are regularly filed and won.

Other Cleveland area centers have farther to go. The rest of us have been having a big problem with union representation. Most inside workers have had no stewards available on their shifts.

If UPS stuck to the contractual agreement this wouldn't have been such a problem. But grievable offenses come up around the clock every single day. It was pretty hard to file a grievance when you couldn't find a steward for days, and when you did find him he tried to talk you out of filing.

New alternate stewards: (l.to r.) Brian Murphy, Anne Mackie, Celia Dunlap, Mike Becka, Christina Bergmark. (Others unavailable for picture.)

As one step toward organizing our centers and calling the company on all their offenses and contract violations, we told the union we wanted alternate stewards for every center and every shift. This would include alternate stewards for all of the part-time shifts in each center. The membership's response to this proposal was overwhelming.

By midweek we had circulated petitions for alternate stewards in every center - part-time and full-time. By Friday the Executive Board of Local 407 recognized all of the member-picked alternate stewards!

This victory is a good beginning. Now we need to organize for the contract fight ahead. It's high time for an upsurge at UPS!

Let's Win Next Time

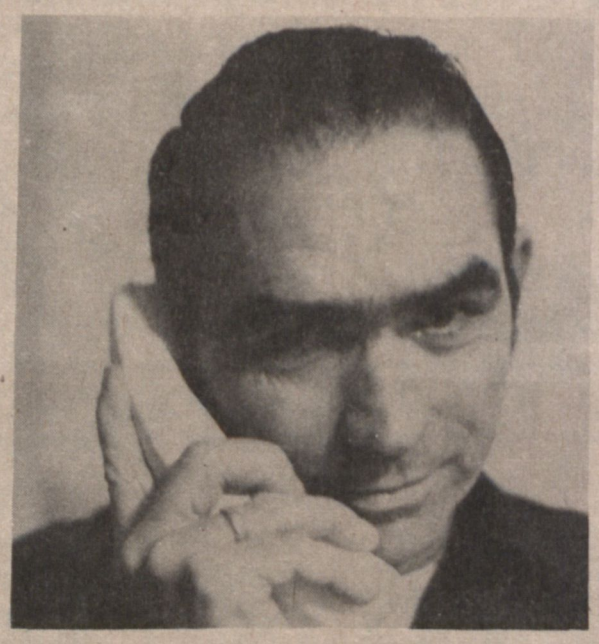
In the fall of 1973, Stewards from several states met in Louisville to discuss the tentative agreement on the new contract. It was unanimously agreed upon that we had gained only monetary items and lost everything else - such as unlimited use of part-time workers, hours of work, step up guarantees, seniority, and much, much more.

We all agreed in this meeting to keep in touch and do everything we could to make sure the contract was voted down. We made lots of phone calls to Stewards in other states and sent out literature urging the part-time and full-time employees to VOTE NO on the tentative agreement. By doing this we were able to vote down the agreement - but, not by a large enough majority to strike.

At this time the Negotiating Committee went back into session and threw a few extra goodies to some of the Locals and managed to get the second agreement ratified. We tried hard to get the word to all the states in the conference that the contract was rotten, but we just didn't have the right tools for the job.

NOW we have the proper equipment -- UPSurge. This paper will be a direct line of communication between UPS employees in every state. Through this paper we can be kept up to date on the contract negotiations. This will enable us to vote down an agreement that we cannot live with.

If you haven't subscribed to UPSurge yet, or have a friend who hasn't, then do so immediately, because this paper is about you and for you. If we all work together we can accomplish anything. IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH.



Vince Meredith
Louisville Steward

Oakland UPS Sets the Alarm

UPS is focusing an attack on the new Oakland, Calif. Hub. In September, UPS got a panel consisting of one company representative and two union reps to overturn Local 70's starting time of 8:00 A.M. and grant the company "open starting times." Set starting times were a contractual agreement.

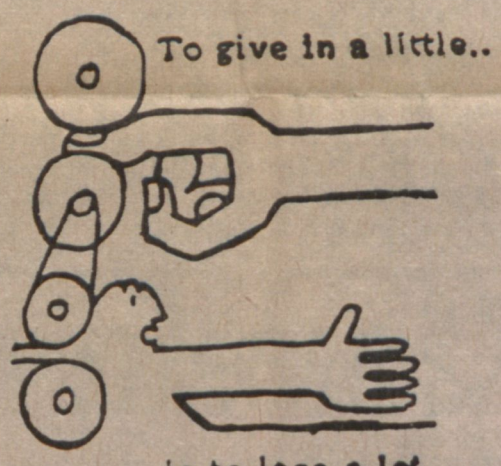
The panel's right to overturn the contract was shaky at best. B.A. Mike Lynn argued that "it is not in keeping with the International Teamster constitution to have a problem like this resolved by a panel like this..."

UPS based its case on a promise supposedly made by Local 70 officials in 1972, offering the company open starting times in return for locating the new Hub within 70's jurisdiction. The local's Secretary Treas., Chuck Mack, called the company's statements "outright lies" and protested to the International but the panel's decision stood.

In Oakland the contract is continually violated: part-timers work six hours with only one break and no lunch (a violation of California's state law), senior employees are not given a chance at higher paid positions, and when an employee is downgraded their higher rate of pay is not maintained. Daily, supervisors do union members' work.

A part-timer was fired for "insubordination" and physically pushed out for requesting steward's representation. There are no union bulletin boards and notices of union meetings are torn off the walls by management.

It's not going to be easy to organize for the new contract while under this kind of attack. UPS'ers in Oakland and throughout Northern California must join with other Teamsters to gain a decent contract this spring. Through Teamsters for a Decent Contract, and through UPSurge, it can be done.



ATTENTION SUPERVISOR

Dear Readers,

There have been requests on the part of our readers to answer the question:"can we hand out UPSurge on company property, in coffee shops, parking lots or around the time clock before start-time?"

The answer is YES, and Arthur Fox (Atty. at Law, legal advisor for UPSurge and the Director of PROD - Professional Drivers Council for Safety and Health) has sent this legal opinion for our use:

> "the promotion of Upsurge and distribution of copies of the publication is legally protected and management, either alone or in collaboration with the Teamsters Union, can do absolutely nothing to inhibit this activity, either directly or indirectly, open or subtle...it is advisable that such activities be confined to non-working time and in non-working areas of the company's premises."

Anyone wishing copies of Mr. Fox's complete letter, send 25¢ to UPSurge, P.O.Box 18213, Cleveland, Ohio 44118.

Who's Complaining?

After reading the new UPSurge some Dayton, Ohio, UPS drivers don't understand what all of the complaints are about. The only time management harasses the drivers here is from the time we clock in until we clock out at night.

Dayton drivers also feel management is extremely fair as far as standards are concerned. One driver only ran 21.9 stops per hour on his route and was caught in a restaurant for 20 minutes after he had finished. He explained to his supervisor he had not stopped all day and that he was hungry. We the drivers agree that this driver did not deserve to stop for this break. After all, if the drivers aren't concerned enough for the company to try to kill themselves in a 10 year period, we don't think they deserve to work for such a fine company.

As far as the union goes, everyone knows the drivers don't really mind if the pension fund trustees lend our money to their friends. At the rate we're working we're not going to live to collect it anyway.

In closing, we think UPS drivers in the United States should adopt the same motto we have here in the Dayton "Land of Concernity," "We don't care about our personal life, our family benefits, or making money. We just love to hussle bundles."

Dayton UPS drivers

Letters

Dear UPSurge,

Please send me 25 copies of the Oct. issue. I will distribute them in every direction from Memphis.

I am very interested in what's going on in other states and I'm really tired of reading all that bull shit from the Big Idea. Especially all that bull about how safety minded UPS is.

Please send me more information on the TDC. All the feeder drivers here are pretty upset about this CB radio policy of the company. I've never seen so many drivers stick together on one issue. Management is passing out warning letters left and right. We're waiting on somebody to get suspended. The Union tells us that there's nothing they can do if we get fired. That the grievance committee has denied to hear the cases. This to me is reason for striking. Are other states having this kind of trouble?

Memphis, Tenn.

I have beaten UPS twice. Federal Arbitrators decided UPS had no proof when they charged me with poor job performance. My battle has been raging for over ten years with no Teamster support and very little support from my fellow workers. I have been with UPS for thirteen years and have flatly refused to work at the fast pace they demand.

I feel UPSurge can benefit all of us and I would like to participate any way I can including financially.

Campbell, California

DRIVERS'

It was at our union picnic that the wives first got to know one another and we became friends. We talked about the trials and tribulations of being a UPS wife. Like for instance the two meals that we must serve every night: one for our children at a decent hour so we can get them to bed, and then one for our husbands who would come in whenever, after working overtime. We talked about how hard it was to raise our children when they didn't have a father to turn to. Or what it was like learning to fix the handle bars on our son's bike because he wanted to ride it now, and couldn't wait for the weekend.

WIVES' UNION

I guess the natural thing happened: we formed an informal union of our own. The old saying that there's strength in unity rang true for us. We all had things in common and could understand each other's complaints like no one else outside UPS could. We were ready to stand up and fight for our cause given the right opportunity. The right opportunity came in August, 1972.

HAIR TODAY - GONE TOMORROW

UPS was making a big deal about the appearance standard. If a driver's hair was an 1/8 of an inch too long, he was given a warning letter. His moustache had to be to the corner of his mouth. His sideburns could not go below the earlobes. The back of the hair could not touch his collar. Customers loved our husbands and were perfectly satisfied. We thought these small and petty complaints were an insult to our personal integrity.

In all, 27 men were given letters and ordered to comply with the standards. They couldn't afford a wildcat strike and risk getting fired, so they thought of us - their wives. A man cannot get fired because his wife walks a picket line in

sLettersLetters

Enjoyed reading number one and hope you can continue this. A national contract is what we need and want. I am a feeder driver in Birmingham, Ala. and would like to offer my help if you need any.

Birmingham, Ala.

I read a copy of your paper, Vol.2. We are very interested in it at the Auto Shop - UPS - Secaucus, N.J.

I mentioned your paper to a few package drivers, and they have heard of the paper, but have not seen it.

I would like to distribute the paper to all the mechanics in the Jersey Dist. There are about 130 of us, including Maintenance men.

Secaucus, New Jersey

This newspaper is really terrific. I have been working at UPS for only six months but already I hate this company. And I am pretty disgusted with the Union, Local 396, because it refuses to fight. Our last contract gave away almost all our job protection. Now the company can change working conditions and procedures anytime it wants to and the Union doesn't say a word. We can be fired for almost anything without any warning letter.

I'm going to make sure UPSurge gets around Los Angeles because we certainly have plenty to fight about, but most workers here seem to think nothing can be done. Your stories about how people are fighting back and winning should help convince LA it can happen here, too.

Los Angeles, Calif.

I've been working for UPS for 2 years and this is the first time I have read your paper and I like what I read. It's about time someone has stuck up for the part-timers. It's ridiculous to drive 25 miles just to work 3 hours. We need more work.

As for me I would be very content working 8 hours a day in one of the most stabilized industries in the nation. I am 100% behind you people, but I can't see how you people can fight both the Union and UPS. Please write me a letter and tell me how I can contribute to our cause both financially and morally.

St. Louis, Mo.

I have worked for UPS as a feeder driver in Dallas, Texas for three years and was threatened to be fired today because of the length of my hair. I have not had a haircut in over two years. About one year ago after much harassment, the company, union and I came to an agreement that if I would wear my hair in a pony-tail everything would be cool seeing as how they also employ women drivers and these are the standards that they too follow. Now UPS is going back on their agreement and saying that hair must be kept off the collar without any object holding it up.

I have made an appointment with my lawyer and as of now plan to fight it to the end.

When I receive your bundle I will send papers to Louisiana, New Mexico, and the other HUBS and centers in Texas.

Mickey Koontz,
Dallas, Tx.

New York Threats

Mel Pressley is a driver in Center 7A in Mid-Town Division, New York City. He was recently put on 72 hours notice for dismissal for failing to sheet some packages that he had brought back undelivered. Mel feels there is more to it than meets the eye. He points out for instance that the Center Manager, Al Williams, often tells drivers not to sheet packages that they bring back, to keep himself from looking bad on paper. But when Mel did it they tried to hang him.

Mel told UPSurge "They talk about not sheeting packages and they throw in lateness and absence, but that's not what it's all about. They want more stops, more pieces, and less overtime. The other stuff is just to tell you they'll nail you if you don't give them what they really want."

Nothing further has been said about Mel's case, thus far, but he knows that's not the end. The way to stop that kind of harassment is to insist on the right to do the job safely, and properly. They can't fire you for doing what you've been told, no matter how long it takes.

IT'S KNEE DEEP IN PITTSBURGH

UPS violates the contract, Article 20, Section 3, Paragraphs 9 and 10 with IBT blessings.

9. The employer will continue to add full time inside employees when the volume makes it necessary.
10. If the volume provides eight continuous hours of work such jobs shall be filled by full time employees. Part time employees shall not be used in two consecutive shifts under these circumstances.

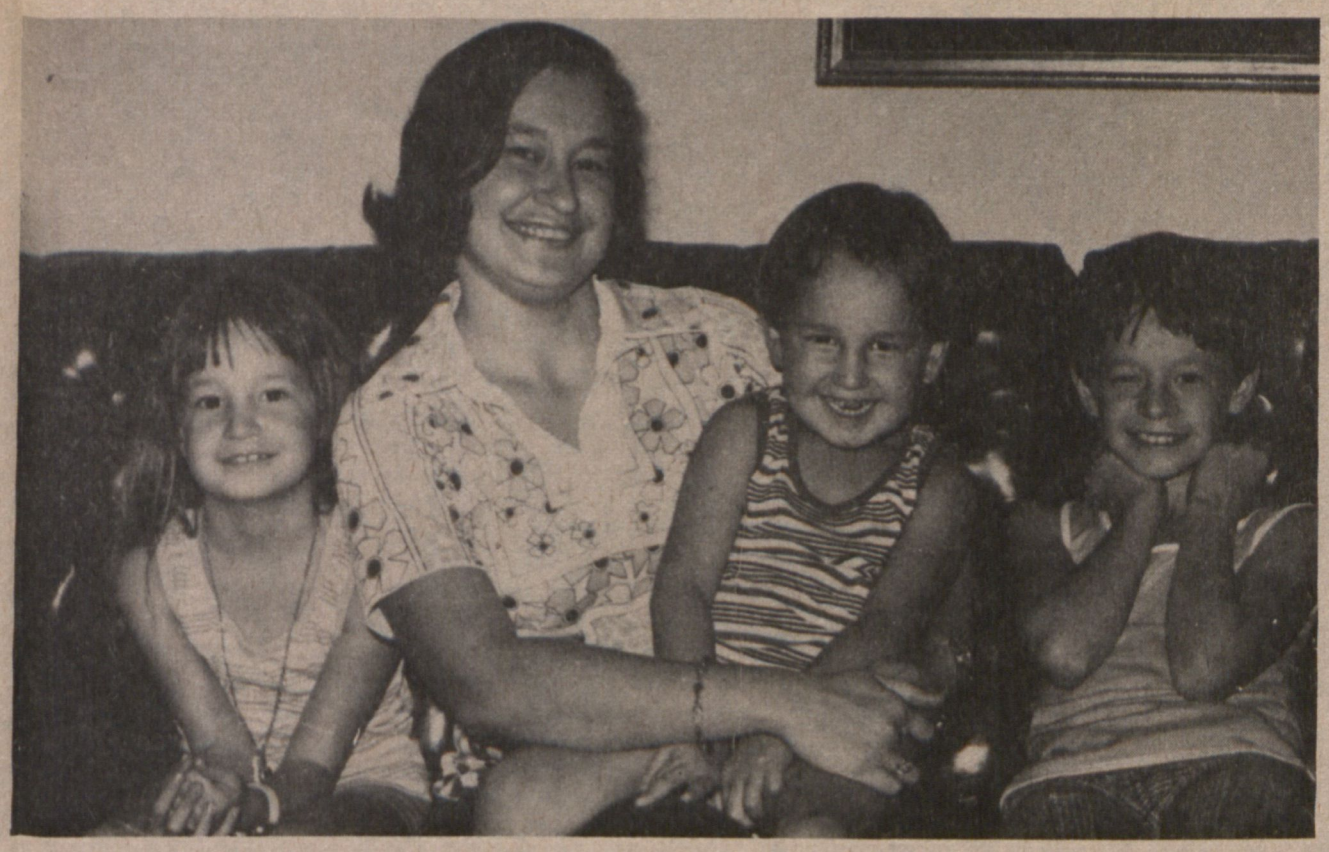
Who decides when the volume makes it necessary? Who controls the influx of packages? Who makes sure there are not 8 continuous hours of work by juggling the volume around?

We now have part time shifts working about two hours apart. We also have full time people that are willing to work this shift, even with a two hour break in between, just to work daylight.

Our local union made a half hearted attempt to correct this situation, but the IBT came in and approved it. Our part time workers are in the union, but get no benefits and about two dollars an hour less than a full time worker doing the same job.

Now it only makes cents and dollars for the IBT to approve of part timers, because they collect twice as much union dues. UPS will continue to hire part timers as it makes cents and dollars to them also. We, the rank and file, will continue to get shit on from the company and the union just as long as we stand for it. All this shit makes good fertilizer; so we should all be pretty damn fertile. UPSurge is the seed; so lets make it grow roots deeper than the corruption in our International Union, higher than United Parcel's profits, and wider than the split between full timers and part timers.

WIVES PICKET UPS



FIONA BECKLEY, LOUISVILLE, KY., STEWARD'S WIFE

front of the HUB! We called the other wives, got babysitters for those who needed them, purchased poster paper and stickers. On Saturday we met in the park and made the signs. Some read, "Billy Graham can work for God, but he can't work for UPS."

We appeared the following Monday morning at the gates of UPS. The men started work at 8:30 so we were there early with our children to send them into work with a kiss, and then cheered them as they were leaving the gate in their trucks. We hadn't forgotten to call the newspaper and television stations. When the cameras started rolling, UPS had hemorrhage fits. Of course we were very brazen and we knew they couldn't do a thing to us, so we had ourselves a ball. When our picket line was shown on Walter Kronkite that evening, UPS didn't like it too well.

We stayed on the picket line for two days and felt we had accomplished what we had set out to do. We had given UPS a scare. They hadn't realized that the wives were that strong. I think the biggest charge we got out of it and the thing that damaged UPS's ego the most was the television publicity. And for women to come in the back door and give them this kind of publicity, we knew that hurt them worst of all. The men know, and I think we've proven it to UPS, that we are there whenever they need us.

sub blank

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P.O.Box 18213, Cleveland, OH 44118

INTERVIEW Teamsters for a Decent Contract

Interview with Mel Packer(Local #249)freight driver in Pittsburgh, Pa. Mel is a founding member of Concerned Rank and File Teamsters (CRAFT) and Teamsters for a Decent Contract (TDC).

UPSurge: What's the object of Teamsters for a Decent Contract?

Packer: Teamsters for a Decent Contract was formed in Chicago last August by 40 rank and file Teamsters from 10 different cities. The reason for forming TDC was to initiate a national campaign which would force the Teamster officials to negotiate a good contract. It's centered around the Master Freight Agreement - the contract which covers about 450,000 workers employed by the largest freight companies.

We've come to realize that there is another reason for waging this fight. Through the connections that we make in TDC and through the unity which will be created by pushing for the same demands on a national level, we will be able to create a national rank and file group which will ultimately be capable of challenging the power of Fitz and Company. Through the fight around TDC, we will be able to create the means of returning democratic control of the IBT to the rank and file.

UPSurge: What's the importance of TDC to UPS workers?

Packer: Well, UPS workers aren't directly covered by the Master Freight Agreement, but all the UPS contracts are patterned after it. Historically we've seen that whatever Freight gets will probably be granted to UPS. From that, it's clear that TDC cannot just be a fight by Freight workers. TDC must involve all Teamsters, especially UPS workers, since you're the largest group in the Union.

UPSurge: How can UPS workers get behind TDC?

Packer: UPS workers can do exactly what the rest of us are doing. You can take petitions into your barns and terminals and collect signatures. You can support resolutions endorsing TDC on the floor of your locals. You can help set up meetings to explain TDC to other Teamsters. Being active in TDC will not only help get a better contract for UPS'ers,but you will also help heal the phony divisions which exist between different groups inside the Teamsters. That will lay the groundwork for a rank and file movement of all Teamsters. regardless of what segment of the industry we work in. You can also help by supporting and building UPSurge, since it's the only voice that rank and file UPS'ers have nationally.

Some UPS workers have been with TDC since the beginning in Chicago and are presently serving on the National Steering Committee of TDC. And in every city I've been to, I have seen that UPS workers are solidly committed to TDC.

UPSurge: What has the response been so far?

Packer: Tremendous. I've just returned from a West Coast tour of four cities and we had enthusiastic meetings and in depth press coverage wherever we went. We are getting letters from cities and towns that we've never heard of, with requests for literature and petitions. We've heard from Teamsters from over 100 cities and towns who want to get involved---many of them from UPS.

UPSurge: What will happen at contract time and after?

Packer: I don't think we can predict right now exactly what is going to happen come March 31. Anyone who says that there's no possibility of a strike is a damn fool, and is totally out of touch with the rank and file. All I can tell you is that I've been hearing an old labor slogan more and more from Teamsters lately. I mean, "No Contract, No Work." Times have changed and people are angry.

No matter what happens, this is only the start of the fight. When the contract is finally signed and we're all back to work, we'll still be fighting. And the rank and file will be in a position, for the first time in our history, to build a movement that will take over the reins of the IBT and restore them to the hands of their rightful owners. And those owners are the over 2 million members who deliver the goods and make this union work.

(For TDC petitions and information send a request to UPSurge.)

The Great Match Thief

The "Wheels" were turning at full speed at UPS, Louisville, Kentucky on Friday, October 10, 1975. In a fashion that would grow hair on Kojak's head, UPS management captured the great match thief. Dana Thomas, UPS part-time sorter was seen putting a book of matches in his pocket and the assumption was guilty until proven innocent. Dana Thomas' story goes as follows.

A box busted open and books of matches were scattered all about his work area. A fellow sorter handed him a book of these matches to take to the re-wrap table. Dana put the matches in his pocket with the thought he would get the matches to the re-wrap table as time permitted. In the cat-like fashion of a master thief, Dana Thomas did not get the matches to the re-wrap table. Later called into the UPS Kangaroo Court, he was told he would be fired for stealing. One point I would like to make here is that Dana Thomas had not left UPS property, nor was he off the dock. The next day the sentence was reduced to a five-day suspension. Dana Thomas met with union officials and the suspension was then dropped to two days after union officials talked to UPS management.

The company felt that a book of matches, not actually stolen, was worth this young man's job. This terrible injustice would have haunted this man his entire life. I know most part-time workers feel their job is only temporary at UPS. Ask yourself this, would you get a job somewhere else with a "Fired" reference from UPS? Remember you are human beings; stand up for your rights and shove the big brown crap back down their throat. The union can help you if you seek them out for help. This is the time for all union brothers, men, women, white, black, full and part-time to unite! Keep this in mind at contract time and each of you will have a chance to cast a vote that can make a difference. A BIG DIFFERENCE!

OUR BIG IDEA

UPS has a Big Idea -- making big money by working us to death. We have a different Big Idea. UPSurge stands for:

A NATIONAL CONTRACT

A national contract with the best conditions extended to all. No more local strikes which are isolated and defeated.

RANK AND FILE CONTROL OF BARGAINING

The IBT officials are now talking about a national UPS contract. It won't be any better than our local ones if we don't have a say in it. The rank and file know what they need. We must elect the bargaining committees.

ELECTED BUSINESS AGENTS AND STEWARDS

We need representatives who are responsible to us and not beholding to the union officials that appointed them.

A NEW GRIEVANCE SYSTEM

Innocent until proven guilty - no discipline until the entire grievance procedure is exhausted. Local right to strike over grievances.

NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINORITIES AND WOMEN

Full union support in cases of discrimination. Don't let UPS divide us by playing black against white, women against men.

AN END TO MILITARY DRESS AND APPEARANCE STANDARDS

Just like the Army, UPS uses regimentation and rediculous appearance standards to try to turn their workers into robots. We say: the union should put an end to this BS immediately.

FULL WAGES AND BENIFITS FOR PART-TIMERS

No new part-timers hired. Present part-timers should have the option of keeping their jobs or getting first option on new full-time jobs. No more playing part-timers off against full-timers.

BUILD A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT IN UPS AND THE TEAMSTERS

Only a strong, organized rank and file movement among UPSers allied with other Teamsters can win these things. They've kept us divided, isolated and in the dark too long. JOIN THE UPSURGE!

UPSurge
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